

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A telephone control system comprising:
 - a plurality of telephone sets which are connected to a plurality of lines, and in communication with each of which a line is selected from among the plurality of lines, each of the telephone sets including:
 - status setting means capable of setting the telephone set into any of a talking status, a talk holding status and a waiting status, and releasing any set status;
 - status discrimination means for discriminating which of the talking status, the talk holding status and the waiting status the telephone set is in;
 - incoming-call detection means for detecting an incoming call signal from any of the plurality of lines;
 - notification means for notifying an incoming call by tone information and/or visible information in response to a detection output from the incoming-call detection means; and
 - control means for controlling operations of the status setting means, the status discrimination means, the incoming-call detection means and the notification means, wherein in a state where the incoming-call detection means has detected a new incoming-call signal from any other line,

when it has been discriminated by the status discrimination means that one line is in the talk holding status, the control means controls the notification means so that an incoming call is notified by, at least, tone information, and

when it has been discriminated by the status discrimination means that one line is in the talking status, the control means controls the notification means so that an incoming call is notified by, at least, visible information.

2. The telephone control system of claim 1, wherein the telephone set further includes:

a tone-information input/output unit capable of inputting/outputting tone information; and
a handset capable of generating and outputting tone information, and

in a state where the incoming-call detection means has detected a new incoming-call signal from any other line,

when it has been discriminated by the status discrimination means that one line is in the talk holding status, the control means controls the notification means so that the tone-information input/output unit outputs the

tone information and an incoming call is notified; and when it has been discriminated by the status discrimination means that one line is in the talking status, the control means controls the notification means so that the handset outputs the tone information and an incoming call is notified.

3. The telephone control system of claim 2, wherein the plurality of telephone sets include a master telephone set and a slave telephone set,

the master telephone set includes slave-telephone-set calling-up means capable of calling up the slave telephone set or releasing the calling-up, and

in a state where a signal for calling up the slave telephone set from the master telephone set is being issued by the slave-telephone-set calling-up means,

when the slave telephone set is in the talking status, the control means included in the slave telephone set controls the status setting means so as to set the slave telephone set in the talk holding status for a predetermined time period, and controls the notification means so that the tone-information input/output unit generates and outputs a ringing tone to notify the calling-up.

4. The telephone control system of claim 2, wherein the plurality of telephone sets include a master telephone set and a plurality of slave telephone sets,

the slave telephone set includes slave-telephone-set calling-up means capable of calling-up another slave telephone set or releasing the calling-up, and

in a state where a signal for calling up the other slave telephone set from one slave telephone set is being issued by the slave-telephone-set calling-up means,

when the other slave telephone set is in the talking status, the control means included in the other slave telephone set controls the notification means so that the calling-up is notified by the visible information, and

when the other slave telephone set is in the talk holding status, the control means included in the other slave telephone set controls the notification means so that the calling-up is notified by the visible information and the tone information.

5. The telephone control system of claim 3, wherein in a state where a signal for releasing the calling-up of the slave telephone set is being issued by the slave-

telephone-set calling-up means, when the slave telephone set is in the talk holding status, the control means included in the slave telephone set the calling-up of which is to be released, controls the notification means so that the output of the ringing tone is stopped, and controls the status setting means so that the setting of the talk holding status is released and the talking status is set.

6. The telephone control system of claim 4, wherein in a state where a signal for releasing the calling-up of the slave telephone set is being issued by the slave-telephone-set calling-up means, when the slave telephone set is in the talk holding status, the control means included in the slave telephone set the calling-up of which is to be released, controls the notification means so that the output of the ringing tone is stopped, and controls the status setting means so that the setting of the talk holding status is released and the talking status is set.

7. The telephone control system of claim 3, wherein the tone information includes a hold tone indicating the talk holding status, an incoming call tone for notifying

the incoming call, and a ringing tone for calling up the slave telephone set, and

the hold tone, the incoming call tone and the ringing tone are formed of tone qualities, tone levels and tone signals which are respectively different from one another.

8. The telephone control system of claim 4, wherein the tone information includes a hold tone indicating the talk holding status, an incoming call tone for notifying the incoming call, and a ringing tone for calling up the slave telephone set, and

the hold tone, the incoming call tone and the ringing tone are formed of tone qualities, tone levels and tone signals which are respectively different from one another.

9. The telephone control system of claim 3, wherein the master telephone set is connected to the plurality of lines, and the slave telephone set is a cordless telephone set which communicates with the master telephone set by radio.

10. The telephone control system of claim 4, wherein

the master telephone set is connected to the plurality of lines, and the slave telephone set is a cordless telephone set which communicates with the master telephone set by radio.

11. The telephone control system of claim 1, wherein the plurality of lines include an analog communication line and a digital communication line.